# Met Office predicts quieter tropical storm season

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The 2012 season, which runs from June to November, is likely to see 7 to 13 tropical storms - with a most likely value of 10.

This is less than the 1980-2010 average of 12 storms and marks a change from the past two years, which have both been particularly active with 19 storms each.

The Accumulated Cyclone Energy (ACE) index - which measures the number of storms and their combined strength - is also likely to be slightly lower than average this year, with a most likely value of 90 compared to the 1980-2010 average of 104.

There is a relatively wide range in the ACE index for 2012, with a 70% chance that the number will be between 28 and 152. This is partly due to the current uncertainty in the evolution of the El Niño/La Niña cycle over the next few months.

Joanne Camp, climate scientist at the Met Office, said: "El Niño conditions in the Pacific can hinder the development of tropical storms in the Atlantic, so how this develops will be important for the storm season ahead - particularly from August onwards, which is normally the most active time for tropical storms."

The tropical storm forecast is produced using the Met Office's seasonal prediction system called GloSea4. The model has better representation of the complex physical processes that cause tropical storms and hurricanes to form, thus improving the accuracy of the forecast. The forecast also uses information from the seasonal prediction system of the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF).

The Met Office provides a detailed forecast analysis of the Atlantic tropical storm season through our Climate Services for Reinsurance. For further information please email consulting@metoffice.gov.uk or contact our 24-hour customer centre.

The Met Office's StormTracker provides real-time information on tropical storms and their projected tracks, as well as comprehensive historical information on past storms. It is available in a free version or those wanting more in-depth information for fully informed decision-making can access an advanced version.

Regular updates and information on the Atlantic tropical storm season are also available through the Met Office's dedicated Twitter feed via @metofficestorms

2012 tropical storm forecast (transcript) (PDF, 88 kB)

## Contact information

Met Office Press Office: **+44 (0)1392 886655**

E-mail: Press Office

Met Office Customer Centre: **01392 885680**

If you're outside the UK: **+44 1392 885680**

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# 2012 tropical storm forecast

Joanne Camp – Climate Applications Scientist

It's been an early start to the 2012 Atlantic hurricane season with the formation of Tropical Storm Alberto nearly two weeks before the official start date of June 1st.

But early activity does not necessarily indicate that the official hurricane season, which runs from June to November, will be more active than usual.

In fact, this year's seasonal tropical storm forecast from the Met Office indicates that 2012 may be slightly below average.

This year the Met Office is predicting a 70% chance that the number of tropical storms will be within the range 7 to 13, with a most likely value of 10. This is just below the 1980–2010 long-term average of 12 storms and is a lot lower than that recorded in the previous two seasons – both 2010 and 2011 recorded 19 tropical storms each.

The accumulated cyclone energy (or ACE) index, which measures the strength and duration of storms during the season, is forecast with 70% probability to be within the range 28 to 152, with a most likely value of 90. Again, this is slightly lower than the long-term average of 104 and a lot lower than that seen last year — the 2011 season recording an ACE index of 124.

You can see there is a large range in the ACE index forecast this year. This is partly due to the uncertainty in the El Niño-La Niña cycle in the equatorial Pacific Ocean. It is possible that El Niño conditions could develop during the latter part of season, which would hinder tropical storm development in the North Atlantic.

For further information on the tropical storm forecast please go to the Met Office tropical cyclone webpage www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/tropicalcyclone/

You can also keep up to date with all the latest tropical cyclones around the globe via the Met Office tropical cyclone twitter feed @metofficestorms.